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ACTION ARA-16
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6083
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
UNCLAS KINGSTON 8804
E.O. 12065: NA
TAGS: PINT, PINR, JM
SUBJECT: PNP ENDS BOYCOTT OF PARLIAMENT AND SUPPRESSION OF CRIME ACT EXTENDED

1. THE OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) ENDED ITS ONE-WEEK OLD BOYCOTT OF PARLIAMENT ON NOVEMBER 25. SEVEN OF ITS EIGHT MPS WERE SWORN IN. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, FORMER PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY, WHO IS OFF THE ISLAND, THE UNDETERMINED WINNER IN THE CONTESTED ELECTION IN WESTERN ST. ANDREW AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NEVILLE GALLIMORE, REMAIN TO BE SWORN IN.

2. FOLLOWING THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONIES, MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY WINSTON SPAULDING PROPOSED THAT THE SUPPRESSION OF CRIME ACT WHICH IS DUE TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 10, BE EXTENDED FOR 180 DAYS, UNTIL JUNE 9, 1980. SPEAKING FOR THE OPPOSITION, PNP GENERAL SECREATRY D.K. DUNCAN, URGED THAT THE ACT BE EXTENDED ONLY THROUGH JANUARY, WHEN THE HIGH CRIME RATE THAT USUALLY CHARACTERIZES THE HOLIDAY SEASON SHOULD DECLINE. REMINDING THE MEMBERS THAT THE SUPPRESSION

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OF CRIME ACT AND THE GUN COURT ACT, WHICH IMPOSES A MANDATORY LIFE SENTENCE ON THOSE CONVICTED OF ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF GUNS OR AMMUNITION (A CHARGE DUNCAN IS UNDER INDICTMENT FOR), WERE NOT ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR PERPETUITY, DUNCAN ASKED THAT DURING THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY, A BI-PARTISAN COMMITTEE ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF GUNS AND VIOLENCE IN ORDER TO REDRESS THE SITUATION, SO THAT NEITHER THE CRIME ACT NOR THE GUN COURT WOULD BE NEEDED. E. SPAULDING REPLIED AT LENGTH, POINTING OUT THAT BETWEEN JANUARY AND OCTOBER 1980, 745 MURDERS HAD BEEN COMMITTED, UP FROM 291 FOR THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD IN 1979, AND THAT THERE WERE 657 MORE CASES OF SHOOTING THAN IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CURB THE

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VIOLENCE THAT THREATENED SOCIETY AND TO SUPPORT THE SECURITY FORCES , 38 OF WHOM WERE KILLED SO FAR IN 1980 IN THEIR EFFORTS. THE EXTENSION OF THE ACT WAS PASSED.
4. WHEN D.K. DUNCAN LEFT PARLIAMENT, HE WAS JERRED BY ABOUT 30 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO REMINDED HIM THAT HE WAS "JUST A BOY NOW WITH ALL THE POWERS GONE."
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